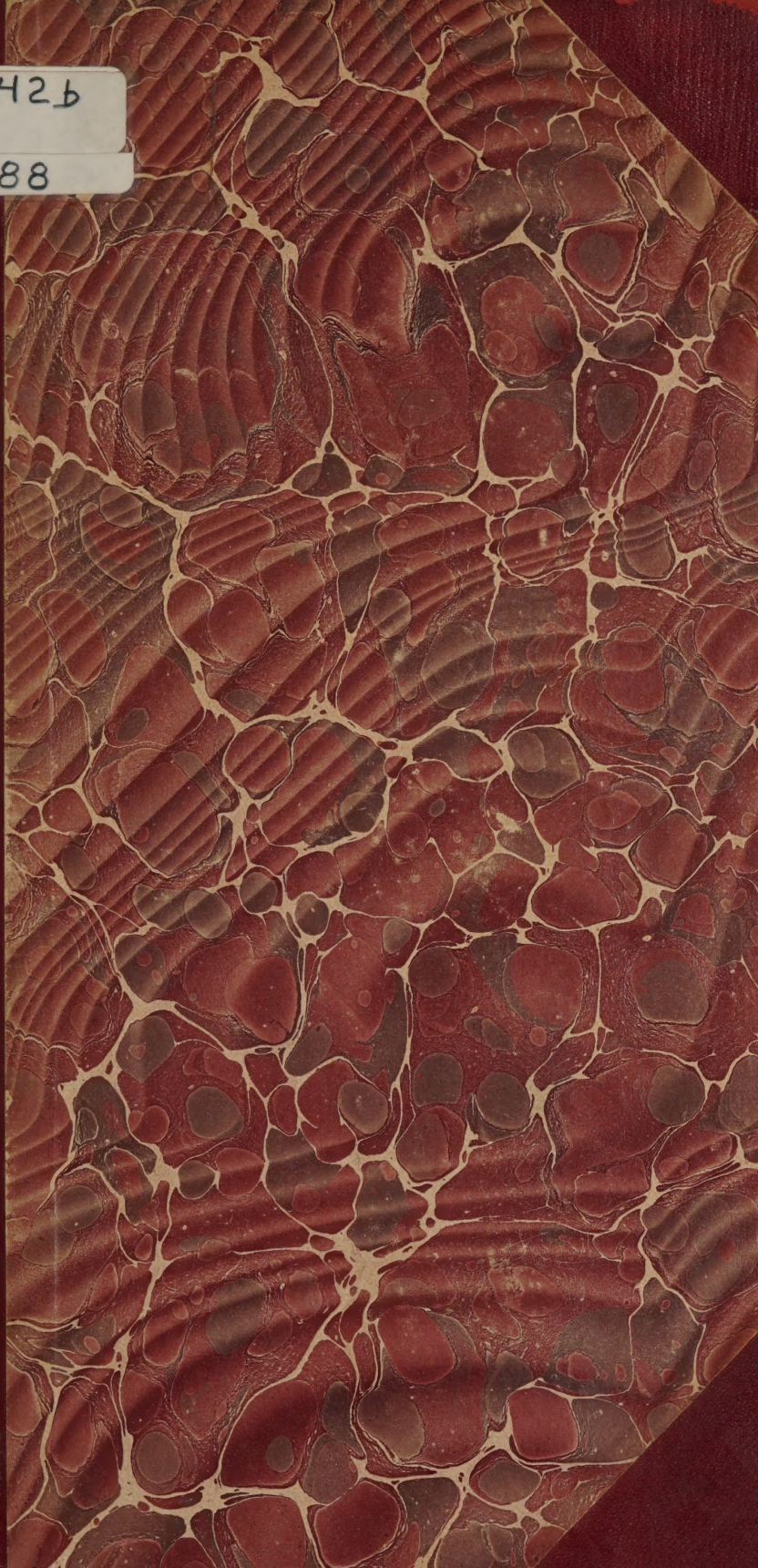


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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

AUDITOR

AND

SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF THE

TOWN OF LITTLETON,

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1875.

New Hampshire
STATE LIBRARY,
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No.....

LITTLETON, N. H.

"REPUBLIC" BOOK AND JOB PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

1875.

Receipts.

From March 1st, 1874, to March 1st, 1875.

Cash in treasury March 1st, 1874,	\$1,599 59
Received for N. H. State Bonds,	6,001 75
“ of town of Jefferson,	35 50
“ for Circus license,	30 00
“ of J. H. Clark on tax 1869,	66 88
“ Savings Bank tax,	964 92
“ Railroad tax,	235 60
“ Literary Fund,	256 66
“ U. S. Bounty,	160 00
“ of L. P. Parker, collector,	20,747 47
“ of Farr & Stevens,	26 00

\$30,124 37

Disbursements.

TOWN OFFICERS.

Dennis Wheeler for services as selectman,	\$191 00
John C. Quimby, “ “	226 40
Joseph A. Albee, “ “	104 50
Geo. Gile, “ “	4 50
John W. English, “ “	14 96
Alonzo Weeks, for services as Treasurer,	65 00
L. P. Parker, “ Collector,	364 44
A. S. Batchellor, for services as superintend- ing school committee,	87 00
Henry W. Smith, for services as town clerk,	47 60
C. E. Milliken, for services as superintend- ing school committee,	25 00
N. G. Smith, for services as policeman,	10 00
Lovell Taylor, “ “	10 00
Wm. M. Atwood, “ “	10 00
Cyrus Young, “ “	10 00
C. S. Goodwin, “ “	10 00
George Abbott, “ “	10 00

\$1,190 40

SCHOOL MONEY.

To the several districts,	\$4,584 53
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SCHOOL HOUSE TAXES.

Union School district,	\$3,200 00
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PRECINCT TAX.

Littleton Fire District,	\$2,476 34
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COUNTY PAUPERS.

For support of Alonzo Place family,	\$65 27
" Mrs. Gonier,	36 18
" Tramps,	47 00
" Clark Woodard,	19 00
" Edmund Haines family,	36 99
" Laban Ainsworth family,	68 64
" Peter Glode family,	91 45
" Mrs. Fitzgerald,	24 25
" William Sherwood family,	93 25
" Lewis Garne,	3 90
" John Messer,	3 00
" Susan Pickett,	172 00
	<hr/>
	\$660 93

TOWN PAUPERS.

For support of Mary Thompson,	\$82 00
" Lewis Gay children,	8 25
" Sally Parker, bal. 1873,	144 00
" " " 1874,	218 00
" John Nurse,	114 52
" Clark Steere,	25 00
" David Waterman,	7 00
" Hattie Steere,	36 00
" Mrs. Hurd,	51 63
" Phin Sherman,	4 15
" Hollis Palmer,	8 67
" Thomas Russell,	38 87
" Charles Nute,	52 00
" Charles Russell,	72 55
" Lathrop Children,	15 00
" Enoch Carpenter family,	92 85
	<hr/>
	\$970 49

PAUPERS BELONGING TO OTHER TOWNS.

For support of Warren Dexter,	\$56 45
“ H. H. Buckman,	24 90

\$81 35

HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES.

Thomas J. Albee, labor on highway and bridge,	\$36 00
Wallace Remic, “ “	4 00
Ezra Keniston, plank for highway,	11 00
Joseph A. Albee, labor on bridge,	22 50
George Bemis, labor on highway,	1 35
Rilan E. Fiske, “	3 00
Edmund Carleton, land damage, highway,	15 00
John W. English, plank for highway,	4 53
Samuel Clasby, “ “	6 00
C. F. Cate, “ “	117 00
G. A. Clark, “ “	6 00
James M. Carpenter, “ “	2 60
Albert Carpenter, “ “	16 64
Geo. W. Carpenter, “ “	5 36
O. S. Osgood, work on highway,	6 00
Wm. Jackman, “	11 00
Henry Fiske, “	3 00
C. F. Cate, plank for highway,	12 00
Geo. W. Williams, labor on highway,	6 50
Frank Walker, “	3 50
Curtis Bedel, “	5 50
Geo. O. Hatch, “	6 50
Geo. Patten, plank for highway,	3 60
Jeremiah Phillips, job on new highway,	85 00
Frank B. Williams, labor on highway,	7 00
William Bowman, “	8 00
Geo. Patten, “	2 15
Franklin Walker, “	8 00
Benj. Sawyer, “	2 00
M. B. Hatch, “	5 00
Cyrus Eastman, land damage, highway	25 00
Albert Carpenter, labor on highway,	10 00
Oliver Byron, “	1 00
Albert Fuller, “	1 00
Shepard Carter, “	1 75
Hiram Steere, “	1 75
Rinaldo Dodge, “	16 00
Geo. W. Richardson, “	2 50

Paid J. W. Merrill, note and interest	1024 00
H. Hadlock, " "	818 00
S. A. Edson, " "	560 00
R. H. Curtis, " "	58 19
J. Farr, interest	2 15
J. W. Gilbert, note and interest	978 50
A. H. Bowman, " "	610 50
M. Page, interest	3 00
Bank of Newbury, interest	60 00
for State Aid	4052 00
for soldiers' bounties	66 131 25
for Schooling	1 717 00
for support of paupers	566 26
cash for support of highways	923 17
War expenses other than bounties	354 31
Treasurer for services	75 00
Police bills	58 35
damage of dogs, killing sheep	48 00
abatement of taxes	86 68
sundry small bills of books, postage, &c., &c.,	49 54
Selectmen's bills paid this year	129 00
Superintending School Committee	75 00
Auditors' bills	20 00
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	\$103 711 56

Leaving a balance due the Treasurer of \$6 526 13, and he also claims some interest on said sum, but we had not time to compute the same and thought best to let it come into the next year's bills. We find the accounts of the Treasurer correctly cast and well vouched for.

The selectmen were anxious to have us audit their accounts, but from the delay of those holding claims against the town of bringing them in for settlement with the selectmen, we had not the time to devote to it, and are not able to give the indebtedness of the town — or the assets.

CYRUS EASTMAN, } *Auditors.*
JOHN FARR, }

March 13th, 1865.

AUDITORS' REPORT
UPON
The Financial Affairs
OF THE
Town of Littleton

For the Year Ending March 13th, 1865.

At the request of the town of Littleton, the undersigned examined the accounts of James J. Barrett, Treasurer for past year, and compared with his vouchers and find charged in all with the town \$97185 43 and received as follows:

Whole amount of money received is as follow	
Cash of State as soldier's bounty	31
County for pauper claims	50
State as bounties	130
on town bonds to sundry persons	530
of Collector to square his bill for 1863	72
C. Lewis on town note	100

C. S. Farr, job on highway,	107 56
Eaton Tarbell, labor on highway,	10 00
Wm. Wheeler, plank for highway,	6 27
Charles Nourse,	312 28
H. C. Redington & Co.,	79 16
R. C. Towns, labor on highway,	1 80
A. S. Robinson	6 00
John C. Quimby,	37 48
Samuel Clisby,	6 50

\$1,051 78

INCIDENTAL EXPENSES.

Benjamin Fiske, damages for injury from defect in highway,	\$30 00
G. W. Barrett, cleaning and warming hall,	9 50
H. L. Tilton, rent of town hall,	100 00
Dennis Wheeler, books, stationery and expenses,	28 60
H. H. Metcalf, printing town reports, &c.,	27 00
Wm. Jackson, books for Byron Children,	5 80
L. R. Bagley, excess of taxes, 1873,	7 00
John Sargent's bill as auditor,	12 00
Nelson Parker bill, hand-cuffs and billies,	24 00
Atwood & Brackett, wood for selectmens' office,	2 25
L. H. Eastman, for waste water,	4 00
E. S. Woolson estate, excess of tax,	18 84
Charles Hartshorn,	62 80
P. R. Goold,	18 84
P. R. Goold, excess tax on E. H. Johnson property,	11 56
C. B. Town, excess tax,	2 08
P. C. Wilkins, perambulating town line,	18 00
Geo. C. Furber, bill for printing,	7 50
Cephas Brackett, excess of tax,	12 85
H. L. Tilton for Sally Tilton, excess of tax,	23 54
W. A. Haskins, excess of tax,	1 00
E. D. Dunn, rent of lobby,	40 00
Russell Steere, for water trough,	3 00
Albian Rowell, excess of tax,	1 00
Benj. Atwood, repairing cemetey fence,	6 00
Wm. Bowman, cedar posts for	15 50
C. E. Milliken, books for poor children,	3 28
G. A. Bingham, legal services,	171 50

E. W. Farr,	"	"	151 07
O. B. Hurlburt, excess of tax,			6 28
John C. Quimby, cash paid out, fares, &c.,			15 95
H. C. Redington & Co., excess of tax,			3 75

\$844 49

DEBTS CONTRACTED PRIOR TO MARCH 1874.

Alfred Bowman, note and interest,		\$1,343 35
John Willard,	"	1,769 49
S. M. Hurlburt,	"	144 72
William Moffett,	"	1,027 29
Priscilla Eastman,	"	223 37
Austin Paddleford,	"	1,221 30
Luther T. Dow,	"	894 70
Edward C. Kinnie,	"	1,208 97
Wm. C. Nourse, interest on note,		10 00
Interest on town bonds,		1,917 00
Myron Carter, sheep killed by dogs,		8 00
F. R. Glover,	"	15 00
F. C. Albee,	"	12 00
C. F. Lewis,	"	24 00
Alden Moffett,	"	6 00

\$9,825 19

STATE AND COUNTY TAXES.

State tax,		\$2,372 00
County tax,	\$2,560 00	
Less pauper claim,	734 34	

1,825 66

\$4,197 66

Amount received,		\$30,124 37
" paid out,		29,083 16

Amount in treasury, \$1,041 21

LIABILITIES.

Town bonds,	\$32,100 00
Interest on bonds to March 1st, 1872,	642 00
Coupons over-due or unpaid,	72 00
Due Thompson children on note,	170 78
“ Susan Gilman, “	167 07
“ Jesse Eastman, “	495 55
“ George Leslie, “	1,516 16
“ Geo. Farr, administrator, on note,	205 49
“ Bridget O'Brien, on note,	151 49
“ Josiah C. Hicks, “	213 69
“ Lucy J. Kenny, “	647 05
“ Druzilla Shay, “	1221 55
“ Ellen M. Cobb, “	34 40
“ Lydia Cobb, “	113 42
“ Richard K. Stevens, “	456 80
“ School district No. 9,	74 84
“ “ “ 12,	110 06
“ Sundry persons, sheep killed by dogs,	45 00
	<hr/>
	\$38,437 35

ASSETS.

Cash on hand,	\$1,041 21
Due from L. P. Parker, collector,	4,749 30
“ on note, E. D. Sawyer and others,	995 19
“ “ Henry Morrison,	105 00
“ from Coos county, support of Buckman,	24 90
“ “ town of Lisbon, “ Dexter,	58 00
“ “ county, support of paupers,	660 93
“ “ “ “ 1873,	84 00
	<hr/>
	\$7,718 53

Indebtedness of town above assets March 1, 1875, \$30,718 82

Indebtedness of town above assets,
March 1, 1874, \$32,647 37

Indebtedness of town above assets,
March 1, 1875, 30,718 82

Indebtedness reduced during the year, \$1,928 55

The undersigned, having been appointed Auditor, would report that I have examined the books and vouchers of Alonzo Weeks, Town Treasurer, and find he has received \$30,124 37, and has paid out the same as appears by the foregoing schedule, with the exception of \$1,041 21 now in his hands. I find all money received and paid out correctly entered upon his cash account with the town, and orders and vouchers for the same filed and numbered to correspond with the entries on his book.

I have also examined the books and papers of the selectmen, and find they have kept a record of all orders issued, and have vouchers for all orders given filed and numbered to correspond with the orders.

O. G. HALE, Auditor.

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

—♦—

To the People of Littleton:

For several years past accessible information as to the real condition of the public schools of this town has been very meagre. No complete report, embodying facts, suggestions and statistics relative to the schools as a whole, has been published in a form for general distribution since that of Gen. Kenney in 1861. Partial reports and statistics, it is true, have been given from time to time in print or orally and in town or district meetings. These, however, if properly published being fragmentary and incomplete, or, if complete and detailed, unpublished; have failed to give a true idea of the condition of the schools taken separately and as a whole throughout the town.

A brief mention of the various sources of information on the subject will justify the opinion just ventured.

The annual catalogue of the Graded School in its day was intended for an advertisement as well as school report. As an advertisement it was hardly reliable and as a report was very incomplete. But that publication after five issues has ceased to appear. Therefore whatever may have been its value while it annually appeared, the catalogue now must be left out of the account.

The Report of the State Superintendent and Board of Education gives some statistics and occasionally a few general observations on educational phenomena in Littleton. Of this report less than a half dozen copies annually find their way into town. Doubtless, too, the number of its readers is less than the number of the copies.

The oral report of the town committee, pronounced late in the afternoon (if not passed over), and under the peculiar circumstances of an exciting election day, is of course heeded by none and heard by few. Thus the figures, facts and recommendations of that functionary are inevitably "washed in Lethe and forgot" before the voters get home from the meeting. A similar fate also awaits the report of the district committee.

The local newspaper now and then leaks a paragraph of useful information or gives space to the essay of some teacher or friend of the school. Such have been for years the only legitimate means of intelligence, offered at second hand on the subject of this report.

Above all, gossip and hearsay revel in the mutual complainings or praises of teachers and pupils. Plainly the amount of this last may be greatly diminished by dissemination of the truth with regard to the condition, conduct and behavior of the schools. In this view there is certainly necessity for a full and reliable school report, it is safe to claim, as often as once in *fourteen years*.

The town at the last annual meeting ordered that the report for the past year be printed.

The interpretation put upon this order by the committee, is that facts and justifiable recommendations only are demanded, to the end that mischiefs may be made apparent and remedies applied. If nothing more is accomplished by the publica-

tion of this report, it may provoke thought on the subject of schools and will, perhaps, serve as a basis for improvement by succeeding committees.

The extent of the general report and the fullness of the statistics appended, seem to render the usual special reports for all the districts unnecessary, and of this kind only the report of the Chairman of the Board of Education for Union District is given.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

The old complaint—too many school districts—is still in order.

In 1861, the date of the last previous printed report, there were 19 districts. Union district absorbed three of them in 1867. No. 4 and No. 9 have recently united and thereby one more is eliminated. The limits of progress in this direction have not by any means yet been reached. 15 districts still remain in this town whose area of cultivated land is about 27 square miles. This gives on an average less than 2 square miles to a district. At first view it would seem that the number of districts might be largely decreased without any hardship to the people. But the distribution of the population and the contour of the land are such that an arrangement of the districts in strict accordance with the greatest economy of territory, is impracticable. Yet the fact remains that there are, notwithstanding the difficulties in the way of consolidation, too many districts.

On the Connecticut river road, a distance of about 12 miles, 5 districts, 5 school houses and 5 schools are maintained. Might not 4 districts and 4 schools accommodate the pupils of that section? The school houses in No. 11 and No. 18 are only

about a mile apart on a bee line and but a little further by road. Is not a union of these districts advisable? Might not district No. 12, in the neighborhood of Mt. Misery—so called—be profitably divided between No. 7 and No. 1; and wouldn't the corresponding improvement in school facilities to all concerned, and especially to the divided district, more than compensate for the extra travel? Furthermore, might not No. 5 and that part of No. 19, in Littleton be united, a new school house built at a central point and better school privileges thereby secured for both districts? Would it be impertinent again to suggest a union of Dist. No. 14 (Scythe Factory,) with Union District? In such an event the more advanced pupils, at the expense of a mile of travel, could have all the privileges of the High School without tuition fees, while a grammar school at the Scythe Factory village would accommodate the younger pupils.

Perhaps those already offered may be considered rash suggestions, for many hands may even now be more tightly clinching the greenbacks while the "snarling muscles" lay the teeth bare; but another in this line will be hazarded. No. 13 is a very small district. In the insufficiency of its school fund, the barn like condition and diminutive proportions of its school house, it has few equals in town. In view of these facts is it not advisable if it is possible; and is it not possible to effect such a division of the district as would enable one part to be joined with Union district and the rest with No. 6? It is true that such a consummation would necessitate a new road for a short distance and a bridge across the river. This is perhaps at first sight a startling proposition, but be assured that there is no considerable danger in simply canvassing it. Indeed it is possible that even a financial

shock inevitable on the developement of such a scheme may not be fatal.

These ideas are expressed with a view to economy as well as progress in school matters. It is a fact that hundreds of dollars are wasted yearly in paying starvation wages to young and inexperienced teachers who make these small districts the field of their first experiments in teaching. The very prime element of economy in this school system is to make each district as large as it can be made, and at the same time give all the youth of the town a reasonable opportunity for enjoying school privileges. To secure this most desirable result, any such expense as would properly be involved in opening here and there a few rods of new roads, or the loss that would result from the abandonment of such school buildings as now prevail, ought not for a moment to be considered. The imperative necessity of a re-arrangement of the district lines,—that the welfare and success of the schools demand it,—is made apparent by the appended tables. That such a re-arrangement is feasible will be conceded by any honest inquirer who will take the trouble to examine the county map, or consult the residents of the districts interested. Is it not plain that the same money divided among nine districts (according to the arrangements above suggested), would accomplish far more than it now can when scattered among fifteen.

But were it not more economical, as regards money, to reduce the number of districts, the fact that more pupils would be congregated, a proportionate degree of enthusiasm developed, a better classification secured, better teachers employed, fewer to be paid, more respectable houses afforded and more efficient supervision guaranteed, seems sufficient to settle the question of the expediency of the measure proposed.

This town has for years been experiencing a constant movement of its population. Districts formerly having large and flourishing schools are now almost destitute of children of school age. The village districts on the contrary have largely increased in school attendance. And here is another reason for the re-adjustment of district lines. Some of the schools must continue to suffer proportionate detriment unless the effects of this movement are met by a corresponding change of boundaries.

The adoption of a town system, which would lodge the management of schools in a town board, is suggested as a remedy for the mischief of present conditions. But would the people more readily adopt this system, and if adopted would it be more beneficial on the whole in its results than re-districting? The great obstacles in the way of any reform of this character, are the difficulty of convincing people of the necessity of a change, and the expense attendant upon building and repairing school houses. These obstacles will be as easily overcome by a modification of the district system as by the town system. There remains then, in favor of the district system, the fact that it would be less expensive, just as efficient and better calculated to engage the sympathy and care of the inhabitants of each district. The prudential committees are, as a rule, efficient and honest public servants, doing their work without pay and under the watchful surveillance of immediate neighbors. They are for this reason less liable to secure places for friends instead of fitness, and in better situation to attend to prudential matters, than any remotely responsible town committee could possibly be. Let useful local institutions be reformed and guarded—not abolished.

SCHOOL HOUSES.

Among the people of several districts a determination or a desire to improve the school buildings has been manifested. These are very gratifying symptoms. The ancient, inconvenient, dilapidated, leaky, unhealthy and dismal "school pens" which remain in some districts, able to have good school houses, are very poor advertisements of Littleton farms, and evidence of a spirit anything but progressive. Realizing these facts a majority of district No. 3 voted to repair or rebuild their house. The district clerk however, in his solicitude for his taxes forgot the duties of his office and refused to return the vote so that the selectmen might make the assessment. It is a blunder to elect such a man to office, and a misfortune that he ever "was made a voter." The only appropriate sphere for his peculiar talent is on some Louisiana returning board, could one be found in which the field of duty is sufficiently limited, and the essential qualification is obstinacy undiluted without troublesome considerations of public obligation. This man belongs to that class whose only work—where a public benefit is to be effected, and is to cost anything—is on the breeching and who are only useful when the car of progress goes too fast. To them the building of a new school house is like the coming of the pestilence, and improvement the destruction that wasteth.

But let them alone. They cannot be convinced. Push on your good work citizens of district No. 3, and you of a dozen other districts similarly situated, why lag behind in this most important movement!

The school buildings in District No. 1, (North Littleton,) No. 3, (Peabody district,) No. 5, (Robbins neighborhood,) No. 10, (Farr Hill,) No. 11,

(West Littleton,) No. 12, (Mt. Misery,) No. 13, (Millen district,) No. 16, (near Waterford upper bridge,) No. 18, (West Littleton,) and No. 19, (Jackman neighborhood,) are unfit for their purposes. It is a public duty to have in every one of these districts wholesome, commodious and modern school houses. The old ones have in all reason had their day. In this connection perhaps the mention of a few particulars on this subject may be allowed. School houses in this age should, for instance have ventilation under human control, instead of that which is governed entirely by the violence of the elements. There should be single and comfortable seats instead of the long uncomfortable benches which are now in general use. The demand for these improvements, with many others, is in the interest of good order, which is next to impossible when from two to six pupils have the range of these long desks and benches: it is in the interest of intellectual independence and improvement which are inconsistent with with any arrangement of pupils which gives the quick learner so good an opportunity to hitch along and help a sluggish neighbor, and the industrious to lug the load of the lazy: it is in the interest of physical health, for no boy or girl can sit on a narrow seat, with a perpendicular back and without touching feet to the floor, and at the same time keep quiet and comply with the unyielding conditions of health. Single seats made to fit the human form *versus* upright board benches which in effect deform the body and prejudice the health, this is one of the issues.

Over and above the insufficiency of the school buildings and furniture, is a lamentable lack of illustrative apparatus. Year after year as the registers are run over for replies to such questions as these: Has the school a clock? A Thermometer?

Globe? Outline Maps? the "No" is repeated until that negative has well nigh become chronic in the school tables. The only consolation to be had in the premises is in the fact that every school house has blackboards.

The pupils and teacher (Miss Edson) of a late term of the Scythe Factory school added a fine Globe to their school apparatus. The spirit which has its fruit in such form is very worthy of commendation and encouragement. With regret it is admitted that this is the only addition made to the illustrative apparatus of any of the schools for several years, either in the shape of Globes, Outline Maps, or even Dictionaries.

But complaint shall not be the whole burden of these pages. The High School building is commodious and already very well furnished. Yet its grounds are waiting to be graded, walled and fenced; its outbuildings remodelled; its hall to be furnished; its laboratory to be replenished in philosophical and supplied with chemical apparatus; and its library and cabinet to be created. The time for much of this is in the future, when the district debt becomes less burdensome and better times become.

In this connection the town and district do not forget the generous manner in which Moses A. Dow has remembered his native town. When the clock strikes the hours, the good judgment and bounty displayed in the selection of so appropriate a gift, is brought to mind. In a most praiseworthy and substantial manner he has impressed his name upon the memory of his townsmen. Would that Littleton were more prolific of sons whose prosperity would be equaled by their filial liberality. And thou too, Father Time, deal out bountifully the years to this man who places at your service and our own so faithful a minister as the Town Clock.

THE SCHOOLS, AND HEREIN OF TEACHERS AND PUPILS.

Schools have been maintained the past year in 15 districts. The tabular statistics contain the details. It will be observed that several districts have not had 12 weeks of school in the year. The law requires all youth between the ages of 8 and 14 years, if of sound health and not elsewhere taught, to attend school at least 12 weeks, provided there be 12 weeks of school taught within 2 miles of the pupil's home. It is a good law so far as it goes; but, while the individual is liable for not sending his child to school, ought not the town to be under legal obligation to furnish good school privileges, at least to the extent of 12 weeks? So long as circumstances render it necessary for somebody to inhabit the less fertile and less profitable portions of the town, just so long schools must be maintained there for the children. It is their misfortune and not their fault to be growing up in districts which can furnish proper educational facilities only at the expense of practical confiscation for taxes. In such a case is it not good policy and public duty, after the districts have raised as much school money as they can afford, and, in order to guarantee economy in the expenditure of the school funds, have been arranged so as to accommodate as many families as possible,—is it not expedient for the town to make good in every such district the opportunities of the common school.

The districts which have a sufficient school fund and are thus enabled to have a fair amount of schooling and experienced teachers, make the best showing. Extra credit is due to some schools in which the progress expected from 30 weeks of attendance seems as it were to have been crowded

into the single terms of eight, ten or twelve weeks. The summer terms, taught both by beginners and veterans, have all been quite successful, and several in a marked degree profitable. Some of the winter schools manifest the lack of a strong hand. The districts had money enough for good length of term with a good female teacher, but not for a good man. As a consequence, the young men who are rejoicing in that portion of the 'teens, when individual importance is most vividly realized, have managed affairs with a high hand and to the prejudice of the regularly constituted authority. District No. 14 employed for their winter term a gentleman who is one of the most successful and experienced teachers of this region—just what No. 3 and No 6 should have had. In districts No. 4 and 10, and in several others, taught by ladies, it is only just to add, that the management was not on the back seats. The necessity of having male teachers in some of these winter schools has by no means vanished with the *fashion* of their employment. Is not a short term of good school preferable to a long one that is bad or indifferent?

Some teachers of large experience have accidentally wandered into districts, whose funds could not command them. The beginners have invariably tried to give complete satisfaction, and many of them have succeeded in a creditable degree. In every instance they have earned their wages. Three or four dollars a week and board got from house to house, is too small a percentage on the investment necessary for a thorough normal school course. None realize the deficiency of their qualifications for the efficient performance of the teacher's work more fully than do these beginners themselves. That beginners in any difficult work should bungle and spoil is inevitable. The extent of these effects de-

pendes largely on the extent and thoroughness of preliminary education. The mind of youth is material to valuable to be indifferently entrusted to unskillful hands. The town of Littleton can better afford to give over its important litigation to the management of young and inexperienced practitioners, and its religious interests into the hands of ministers untutored in theology, than to compel its agents through poverty of school funds to entrust the intellects of the children to the hazardous care of untried instructors, who may be utter failures in the work, and, at best, can only prove themselves possible successes.

These remarks are in no way intended, and let them not be understood, to discourage or reflect upon our young and scantily prepared teachers. So long as districts have so small wages to pay, in most cases only the more advanced pupils of one district can be secured to go into the neighboring district and teach classes of which they are but little in advance. It is indeed a most worthy ambition, and in every way commendable, to aspire to gain experience in teaching, to accomplish self education, and to earn money to assist at home. The only object in view in this connection is to convince the people that it is policy to improve the school system, so that these same teachers before they begin the practice, can afford to take a thorough course in the High School, Normal School, or both. This town has furnished schools abroad with hundreds thus prepared. Why not keep them at home? Depend upon it while the present relations of cause and effect exist, first-class teachers will have first-class situations and first-class pay.

There is a legion of promising scholars in this town. These bright intellects of course are best displayed in districts which have the best schools

and longest terms. What is your opinion, people of Littleton, of 8 or 10 weeks of cheap school and upwards of 40 weeks of vacation for the school children of districts where school opportunities are so needlessly and unjustly limited? Will you not hasten the time when the privilege of receiving a sound, complete, wholesome, well-taught common school education shall be guaranteed to all these promising boys and girls, who will soon be important factors in public prosperity, whose health is fortified by labor, and whose ^{days} ~~nights~~ are not drugged by the poisonous pleasures of village nights.

REGISTERS.

A recent statute (1874) requires the Town Committee to make such report to the State Superintendent as he may direct, and emphasizes the requirement by a possible fine of fifty dollars. A very full report has been required this year, and considerable labor expended in its preparation.

For data relative to the disposition of the school money, prudential matters, etc., the prudential committees have been the chief authority and blank circulars, sent to them for information, have been very carefully filled. Many questions in the teacher's register might be more properly and correctly answered in all cases by the prudential committee. If blanks were furnished especially for them by the State, and a clear statement of the items of information desired, included, a great saving of labor for all parties and greater accuracy in the reports might be effected.

The committee also depend largely on the teachers' registers for statistics and other material of their report. These registers, therefore, ought to

be carefully and correctly filled. Outside of Union District this has generally been the case. But in Union District every one of the thirteen registers returned have been more or less incomplete. Is it not asking a trifle too much of the committee to fill out the teachers' registers in addition to the compilation of their own report? It is not of error but of negligence that this complaint is made. The idea of a term of ten weeks school with forty pupils and no tardiness, as would appear from some of the registers, is too absurd to be entertained. What is a register good for as a public and permanent record, wherein simple names as William and Susan are tortured into a dozen different nick-names and thus recorded instead of their correct originals? How can anybody reckon the average age of pupils when the ages of the individuals are not entered at all. These are simply specimens of numberless blunders of omission and commission. The law provides a very effective remedy for this nuisance, and its application is recommended.

SCHOOL BOOKS.

The principal text books in authorized use in town are Sanders' Readers, Guyot's Geographys, Green's Grammars and Greenleaf's Arithmetics. In several districts other books on these subjects have been allowed to creep in and divide classes, which, being composed of pupils of about the same degree of advancement, ought to be united. This is notably the case in No. 2 and No. 4.

There is no great difference in the merits of the different common school text books in general use. As a rule, change of Readers, Spellers and Arithmetics is no improvement. Works on Geog-

raphy must be reasonably modern to keep pace with new discoveries and alterations in the boundaries and names of political divisions as they are constantly being made. There is a similar necessity of occasional revision of text books in the sciences. No text book need be changed oftener than once in ten years and most of them may be continued profitably for a much longer time.

But publishers agents are persistent and percentages are tempting. Look out for your committee or they will be captured.

SUPERVISION.

In a town of the size and contour of Littleton it is no small task to do this work well. It may be performed with the least friction by doing as little as possible, saying nothing and making a bill accordingly. The adoption of this method, however, is hardly as desirable as it is cheap. The people are well aware that the distance to be traveled, teachers to be examined, schools to be visited, complaints to be heard, mischiefs to be remedied, grumblings to be ignored, and the reports to be prepared, combine to make the office no sinecure to the person who would faithfully perform its duties.

So far as it has been possible, at least two visits have been made in each term. Only two or three, and those, too, quite short terms, have been allowed to pass without a visit; and these instances were occasioned by unavoidable detention and were not by any means the result of negligence.

The policy pursued with regard to examination of teachers has been such as would supply all the schools with teachers of the best possible qualification, reference being had to the pay to be

received and the character of the school to be taught. The supervision is more freely and less deservedly criticised on this point than on any other in the whole work. Perhaps the difficulties in the case are not fully apprehended. Some of them appear in the preceding pages. All the patrons of the schools must recognize certain facts which bear on this subject. You know how frequently it happens that good scholars, through lack of health or enthusiasm, abundance of indifference, petulance or inexperience and innumerable other disqualifications, which defy detection in the most thorough book examination, make ignominious failures in the school room; while others, though superficial in scholarship yet generously endowed with characteristics just the reverse of those above enumerated, are remarkably successful. This being the case the danger of trusting too implicitly to such examinations as the test of a teacher's fitness, and the difficulty of rendering to the public and the candidate exact justice in the premises becomes apparent. Beyond this is a still greater difficulty: there is not great competition among the teachers for eight weeks schools out of which they perhaps may realize only fifteen or twenty dollars. Twelve or fifteen years ago a minimum of qualification was fixed and a certain degree of proficiency required of the candidates for certificates by the examiners for this town. This plan being put in operation simply resulted in leaving several districts without any teacher. These are some of the reasons why no such Procrustean system has been adopted during the past two years.

Very few teachers have presented themselves with ideal qualifications, but in general they have done their work in a manner which ought to satisfy the expectations of any one familiar with the present school system.

Examination can not of itself endow men and women with character, dignity, authority, judgment, kindness, education and experience in the exact proportions which belong to that rare personage—the perfect teacher. Good pay, a regular home, a comfortable school room and cordial support—these and these alone will accomplish as much as is possible “in this latitude,” towards securing this most invaluable public benefit. The most careful examination can only be its partial test.

QUERIES.

The State Superintendent asks the views of his subordinates on several topics.

1. The practicability of holding town teachers' meetings under the direction of the superintending committee for the consideration of educational subjects.

The undertaking would involve a great deal of travel for some of the teachers in this town and perhaps they might be loth to give up any of the time usually allotted to them for recreation. At all events the possibility of its usefulness perhaps renders it well worth while to try this plan. It would seem that in so far as they are practicable and made interesting, considerable good might be derived from such meetings.

2. Concerning an annual County meeting of town superintendents.

The advisability of such a measure, to be enforced and supported by legislation, is certainly very questionable. It would be a great inconvenience to many superintendents; little accomplished but talk and a considerable expense to somebody involved. This money would do much more good

if applied upon the schools in a less roundabout manner.

3. The re-establishment of Teachers' Institutes at the expense of the State.

Don't let it be done. The chief characteristics of these Institutes are sound and noise which signify nothing: their principal results are a good time for the teachers and a vacation for the schools. If it is a matter of public duty and expense to keep the teachers enlightened as to modern theories of teaching or new developments in the world of thought, the better course would be for the State to send each one a copy of some good school magazine: if to educate them, then why not pay a part of their expenses at Plymouth where they will be sure of practical and methodical instruction?

The doctrine of this report however, is that teachers should be paid liberally, and that then they should educate themselves.

Place to the credit side of the last Legislature's account the abolition of Teachers' Institutes.

The opinions desired upon other subjects are fully given elsewhere and need not be repeated in this section.

TWO EVILS.

The two chief defects in the school system, as it now exists in this town, are (1), the insufficiency in amount and injustice in distribution of school money and (2), the abominable arrangement of the district boundaries.

The first difficulty may be removed in a very simple manner. Raise enough money for a good school in each district and apply it for that purpose. A step was taken reformward at the last town meet-

ing which voted an increase of five hundred dollars on the usual appropriation for the support of schools.

The second mischief is the more serious and stubborn of the two. Its only remedy savors so strongly of new school houses and strikes so directly at the determination entertained by so many householders to have, each in his own dooryard, a school house, that the promptitude of its application will hardly correspond with its immediate and vital importance.

Careless husbandry which exhausts the soil, the ravages of the war, western emigration, the rush of young men into the trades and other causes, too well known to be particularized, have served to thin out the adult population, and almost decimate the old time school population of the farming regions.

Nothing will be more effectual in counteracting the manifest and injurious results of the present school management and school conditions, whatever may have been their causes, than the removal of these two radical hindrances to their economical and efficient operation.

This accomplished there remain to affect the schools only those evils which are ineradicable and which nobody proposes to attack; and those which are less important and only temporary, and which in due time will be properly met by the good sense of the people.

Respectfully submitted,

A. S. BATCHELLOR,

Committee.

UNION DISTRICT.

REMARKS UPON THE SCHOOLS.

The school year has been one of general prosperity, and I think it may be said of a somewhat increased interest on the part of scholars, teachers and parents. There have been five separate schools for the year, except one term, when there were but four. The number of scholars became so reduced during the last spring term, by reason of sickness and other causes, it was thought possible that four schools might accommodate all the scholars: but the number of little ones that flocked into the single Primary school during the Fall term was so great,—seventy-six in all, with an average of sixty,—that it was deemed best to restore the Second Primary.

The spring term of the 1st Primary school was taught by Miss Alice Abbott; it was a very good school. The fall term was taught by Emma J. Morrison. The teacher was very diligent and the school all that could be expected with the number of scholars.

The winter term has been under the charge of Mrs. Church who brought to her work several years of valuable experience, which united to untiring diligence and glowing enthusiasm has made the term very successful.

The 2d Primary spring term was taught by Miss Emma J. Morrison with her usual faithfulness and success.

There was no 2d Primary school during the fall term.

The winter term has been under the charge of Miss S. F. Harriman. She brought to the school several years of experience in the schools of Massachusetts, and has taught with unusual tact and

success. May she long be retained in her present position.

Passing to the Intermediate school, two teachers have been employed. The spring and fall terms were under the instruction of Miss L. A. Cobb. She is a good teacher, and her schools were a success. Yet the necessity that was upon the teacher, during the second term, by reason of ill health, to relinquish her school into other hands—good hands though they were—causing a frequent change of teachers during the same term, worked somewhat unfavorably, so a change was made for the winter term. Miss Emma J. Morrison was advanced from the Primary School and has taught with her usual diligence and success.

The Grammar school has had two different teachers. The spring term was taught by Mrs. S. C. Quimby who then completed her twenty-second term of successful teaching in this building; twenty terms in the Intermediate school, two in the Grammar school. She had been identified with the school from the first and had sustained herself well. Nevertheless there had been a growing conviction for some time that a change would be desirable, that a new teacher with new methods would in many ways create a new interest.

Miss Anna F. Morrison was engaged and has now been in the school two terms. She came well recommended and her reputation she has thus far well sustained, and the hope and expectation is that she may continue equally happy in her efforts for the future.

The spring term of the High school was under the charge of Mr. Hutchins which completed the year for which he was engaged. With the commencement of the school year Mr. F. P. Moulton was employed as Principal. The school under

his direction has been a success; he is scholarly in his teaching and efficient in his management, and from the first has been gaining in the esteem of the public and the pupils.

The last examination, occurring a few days since and continuing through the day, made it clearly evident his classes had been thoroughly taught.

The same teacher as for the last five years continues to grace the Assistant's chair. Your committee have for her only words of the highest commendation. May she long continue to fill the place she now so worthily occupies.

In drawing these remarks to a close, your committee feel constrained to ask attention to one source of injury to the High School, for which the scholars are in no way responsible, but the parents and patrons of the district. I refer to the numerous diversions upon the pupils' minds. Take the last term of the High School as an example. It is the united testimony of the teachers that the first part of the term was all that could be desired in attendance and studiousness. But during the last half of the term, about one half of the High School scholars have been attending pleasure parties once or twice a week for half or two-thirds of the night. The effect upon the pupils' minds can be easily imagined. The school was no longer the first thing; careful, earnest study, was at an end. The day previous to the night of pleasure was spoiled by anticipation. The day after, the scholars were "sleepy," "absent minded," "dull," complaining of "headache," "sick and absent," and often knew "absolutely nothing" about their lesson. (Quotations are from the exact words of the teachers.) With a third of the scholars thus affected,—gener-

ally the older ones,—the influence upon the rest of the school would be to unsettle and demoralize, and introduce an element of heedless inattention; working sad injury to the value of the school. Of course in all such matters every parent has the right to direct his own child. Neither committee nor teachers claim any right to interfere. But how any teacher can make successful headway against such a counter current it is impossible to see. And your committee cannot forbear the suggestion to the voters of the district, that it is poor economy to sustain our schools at so large expense—though it be none too large—and thus allow the pupils to pursue a course that shall so materially detract from the sterling value of those schools.

Respectfully submitted,

C. E. MILLIKEN,

Chairman.

TABLE OF STATISTICS.

NAMES OF PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEES		NAMES OF TEACHERS.		
Districts.		First Term.	Second Term.	Third Term.
1 Albert Carpenter.		Emma L. Howland.	Adelbert Goss.	
2 Alonzo E. Town.		Addie E. Smith.	Eliza J. Blakeslee, Nell Cleasby	
3 Jacob K. Dunbar Jr.		Amanda M. Williams.	Lucy A. Wilson.	
4 Bradford Kline.		Sue C. Edson.	Sue C. Edson.	
5 Ashbel W. Cobleigh.		Jane Abbeey.	Matlie J. Cobb.	
6 Guy Parker.		Susie E. Jones.	Susie E. Jones.	
7 Chester M. Goodwin.		Matlie J. Cobb.	Minerva A. Goss.	
8 Now a part of Union District.				
9 United with district No. 4.		Vina Taylor.	Laura Farr, Lydia A. Cobb.	
10 John W. Fitt.		Estelle A. Chandler.	Susie Moffett.	
11 Myron Carter.		Emma L. Cushman.	Clara M. Longley.	
12 Benj. Fisk.		Ellen E. Renfrew.	Dan F. Gordon.	
13 Aaron D. Fisher.				
14 Isaac W. Bowman.		E. M. Elliott.		
15 Now a part of Union District.				
16 Martin Hatch.				
17 Now a part of Union District.				
18 Albert Fuller.		Lucy A. Wilson.	Dell A. Barrett.	
19 Carter Jackman.		Sarah Quimby.	Frank P. Moulton.	
Union dist.		Frank D. Hutchins.	Hattie D. Meserve.	
Schools in this district are un-	High School.	Hattie D. Meserve.	Anna Morrison.	Frank P. Moulton.
der supervision of a board of	Gram. School.	Sarah C. Quimby.	Lydia A. Cobb.	Hattie D. Meserve.
Education.	Intermediate.	Lydia A. Cobb.	Emma J. Morrison.	Anna Morrison.
Totals.	2d Primary.	Emma J. Morrison.	Sarah F. Harriman.	Emma J. Morrison.
Averages.	1st Primary.	S. Alice Abbott.		Sue H. Church.

Statistics Continued.

Districts.	Entire amount of school revenue.	Expended for permanent repairs.	Expended for teachers' salaries.	Paid superintending committee.	Paid to reduce debt and pay interest.	Miscellaneous expenditures	Total of expenditures	Unexpended balance.	Average expense of entire expenditure for each enrolled pupil.	Average expense of entire expenditure for each pupil of average attendance.	Average expense of current expenses for each pupil.	Average expense of current average attendance.	Official visits made by superintending committee.	Examinations attended by parents and citizens.	Visits by prudential committee.	Visits by other citizens.	Volumes furnished needy children.	
1	119 45		104 00			10 60	114 60	4 85	7 16	12 74	7 16	12 74	8	2	1	20		4
2	138 76		125 20			12 40	151 60	1 16	6 25	8 60	7 65	8 60	8	2	1	40		
3	150 68		125 00			25 65	150 65	0 03	4 43	7 65	4 43	7 65	3	2	1	15		
4	204 55		134 00			24 53	178 53	26 02	6 61	10 50	6 61	10 50	4	2	1	25		
5	107 85		92 00			15 85	107 85		8 29	17 97	8 29	17 97	8	2	1	28		
6	204 00		176 00			28 00	204 00		7 03	12 75	7 03	12 75	3	2	1	12		
7	133 75		124 00			8 98	132 98	77	5 54	11 08	5 54	11 08						
8																		
9	143 44		124 50			13 59	138 09	5 35	8 63	12 55	8 63	12 55	8	2	1	21		
10	82 90		70 00			4 50	74 50	8 40	5 38	8 28	5 32	8 28	2	2	1	17		
11	40 90		25 00			9 00	34 90	6 90	2 83	3 40	2 83	3 40	4	1	1	18		
12	112 05		99 00			9 00	108 00	4 05	1 80	15 2	10 80	15 42	4	4	1	15		
13	191 22		169 50			21 25	190 75	47	4 43	7 94	4 43	7 94	3	2	1	45		
14																		
15	72 86		55 00			17 86	72 86		6 07	6 62	6 07	6 62	2	1	1	37		
16																		
17	67 68		52 00			1 19	53 18	14 50	3 79	5 31	3 79	5 31						
18	54 66		54 66				54 66		6 81	9 11	6 81	9 11	1	1	1	7		
19	7200 25		990 99			807 98	6795 25	405 00	19 68	36 01	16 44		20	3	20	51		
Union dist.																		
	112 00		217 00				112 00		13 55	23 28	9 65	13 15						
	9137 00		3882 85			1010 37	8659 50	477 50										

* As to this District statistics of money furnished by this town and pupils residing in this town only are given.

† The school money belonging to District No. 9 was transferred to District No. 4 to prolong the school in that District, the two Districts having been united.

‡ Amount paid by town for services of School Committee.

§ The amount paid to reduce debt and interest, the amount for permanent repairs, and the amount paid committee, are taken from the entire expenditure to give amount of current expenses.

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